

جمهوری اسلامی افغانستان  
وزارت مالیه



د افغانستان اسلامي جمهوریت  
د مالیې وزارت

Islamic Republic of Afghanistan  
Ministry of Finance

Congresswoman Nita Lowey  
Washington, D.C. Office  
2329 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Kabul, 30 June 2010

Dear Congresswoman Lowey,

Recent media reports have raised serious corruption concerns on aid provided to Afghanistan, including allegations for a possible role for our Government in assisting or part-taking in this fraud. I have followed this discussion with great concern.

Our public financial management systems compare well to the countries at the same level of development, as assessed by many of our partners such as USAID and the World Bank. In preparation for the Kabul Conference in July, we are determined to strengthen them further to ensure that any aid delivered through the Government is used in a responsible, accountable and transparent manner. We are happy to provide you our Public Financial Management Action Plan that has received a warm welcome from the international community.

But as you know, only 20% of aid in Afghanistan (5% of the whole US Government's assistance) is spent through the Government budget. The rest is going to development and security projects outside our systems and outside our control. In particular, while during the last 3 years \$19.6bn of aid has been delivered to Afghanistan, Government has had full discretion and control only over \$1bn. Therefore, it is also critical that full transparency and effectiveness principles are also applied to the aid directly spent by donors or their contractors.

The specific concerns with regards to the cash trafficking from Afghanistan are serious, which Government has already identified and is currently investigating. Our records show that \$4.2bn has been transferred in cash through Kabul International Airport alone during the last three and a half years. After more comprehensive assessment, the amount could be even higher. Whilst cash transfers are in principle legal, we are concerned about the amount and source of this estimated transfer.

On behalf of my Government, I would like to request the cooperation and assistance of the US Authorities in undertaking a joint, full and transparent inquiry into these concerns.

Sincerely,

Dr. Omar Zakhilwal  
Minister of Finance  
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan